

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 H-02
SSM-05 SIG-02 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 INR-10 NSAE-00
SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-05 ACDA-12 MCE-00 EB-08 /113 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
S/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
-----085273 180307Z /64

O 172342Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA
NSC

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 17

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 17,
1978. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS MR. KEN BROWN.

Q. THERE ARE REPORTS OF AN INCREASED LEVEL OF FIGHTING
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IN LEBANON, INCLUDING SURROUNDING AND CHRISTIAN SECTIONS
OF THAT COUNTRY. IS THERE ANY CHANGE, OR ANYTHING NEW
THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS DOING OVER THERE IN AN EFFORT
TO RESTABILIZE THAT SITUATION?

A. I HAVE SEEN THOSE REPORTS. I DON'T HAVE ANY
CONFIRMATION OF THE REPORTS THEMSELVES. WE ARE
CONTINUING OUR CONTACT WITH THE PARTIES CONCERNED, BUT I
DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NEW FOR YOU.

Q. THE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE OVER THE PAST
MONTHS HAVE PUT OUT A NUMBER OF STATEMENTS STRESSING
THAT RESOLUTION 242 APPLIES TO ALL FRONTS IN THE
FIGHTING. I WONDER WHETHER, AS A RESULT OF MR. DAYAN'S
VISIT, YOU HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHETHER THE
ISRAELIS SHARE THAT.

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY READOUT ON THE DISCUSSIONS WITH
DAYAN, AND I DON'T KNOW OF ANY CHANGE ON THE PREVIOUS
ISRAELI POSITIONS ON 242.

Q. THAT'S STILL OF CONCERN? YOU ARE STILL NOT SURE

WHETHER THEY ACCEPT 242 APPLYING TO THE WEST BANK?

A. I DON'T RECALL, RIGHT OFFHAND, WHAT THE DEFINITIVE POSITION IS OF ISRAEL ON 242.

Q. THERE IS NO CHANGE AS FAR AS YOU KNOW?

A. AS FAR AS I KNOW. I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT THOSE CONVERSATIONS HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT A CHANGE.

Q. ANYTHING ON ROY ATHERTON'S TRAVELS?

A. HE WILL BE IN JERUSALEM ON MONDAY. AND OUTSIDE THAT, UNCLASSIFIED

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THE ITINERARY HAS NOT BEEN PINNED DOWN.

Q. WELL WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT ITINERARY IS HE GOING JUST TO CAIRO, OR IS HE GOING ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. HE IS GOING, AS YOU KNOW, PRIMARILY BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT. BUT IF IT IS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE AT THE TIME, VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES ARE QUITE POSSIBLE.

Q. WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES ARE YOU THINKING OF?

A. I THINK THAT WOULD DEPEND ON WHAT THE JUDGMENT IS AT THE TIME. BUT THERE MAY WELL BE VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES.

Q. TO JORDAN AND SYRIA?

A. JORDAN, I WOULD THINK, COULD BE INCLUDED. I DON'T WANT TO GIVE A FULL RESPONSE TO THAT BECAUSE I REALLY DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION. I JUST KNOW THAT IT'S POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL GO ELSEWHERE.

Q. AND ALSO, IS THERE ANYTHING ON HIS CHANGE OF TITLE? WILL HE BE APPOINTED AMBASSADOR AT LARGE?

A. I HAVE NOTHING FURTHER ON THAT.

Q. THE CONTACTS WITH THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN

LEBANON -- HOW IS IT BEING DONE? THROUGH THE EMBASSY? OR ARE YOU INTENDING TO SEND SOMEBODY FROM HERE TO BEIRUT OR DAMASCUS?

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A. MY UNDERSTANDING IS THROUGH OUR EMBASSIES.

Q. WITH REFERENCE TO THE BOMBING IN AN ISRAELI BUS THAT THE PLO HAS TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR, I WAS WONDERING WHETHER YOU HAD ANY COMMENTS ON THE ACT ITSELF. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, HAVE YOU HEARD FROM ANY ARAB GOVERNMENT OR ANY ARAB OFFICIAL OF STANDING IN PROTEST AGAINST THIS ATROCITY?

A. IN RESPONSE TO THE FIRST PART OF YOUR QUESTION, WE DEPLORE THE ACT. IN RESPONSE TO THE SECOND, I DON'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON THAT.

Q. HAVE WE MADE ANY REPRESENTATIONS TO ANY GOVERNMENT OR ANY INTERNATIONAL ENTITY THAT RECOGNIZES THE PLO AS LEGITIMATE ABOUT THIS SORT OF ACT -- AS AN ACT OF IRRESPONSIBILITY?

A. REGARDING THAT SPECIFIC ACT?

Q. ON OTHERS -- BUT THIS ONE IN PARTICULAR.

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY.

Q. WE HAVEN'T MADE ANY PROTESTS, OR TAKEN ANY ACTION.

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT WE HAVE MADE ANY PROTEST OVER THAT ACTION.

Q. WHAT DO WE HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THIS ACTION BY A HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION -- AGAIN ATTACKING ISRAEL?

A. WELL WE HAVE MADE OUR POSITION CLEAR, I THINK, AT THE COMMISSION MEETINGS AND IN OUR VOTE.

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Q. THE SENEGALESE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE DEALING WITH THE SOLIDARITY DAY WITH PALESTINIAN ARABS HAS SAID THAT NO AMERICANS OR NO WESTERNERS WOULD BE PERMITTED TO BE ON THIS COMMITTEE BECAUSE THEY VOTED AGAINST THE APPROPRIATION. IS THE UNITED STATES GOING TO SUPPORT THIS COMMITTEE BY HELPING TO FUND IT? WHAT ACTION ARE WE TAKING ABOUT THIS CHAIRMAN'S VIEW THAT OPPOSITION

TO A RESOLUTION MEANS OSTRACIZATION FROM IT?

A. I DO HAVE SOMETHING HERE ON THE QUESTION OF AMERICANS FILLING POSITIONS ON THE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS UNIT. IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE REFERRING TO?

A. YES.

A. THERE EVIDENTLY WAS A REPORT THAT THE UN HAD BEEN TOLD THAT IT SHOULD NOT HIRE AMERICANS TO FILL POSITIONS ON THE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS UNIT. AND OUR RESPONSE TO THAT IS THAT THE REGULATIONS GOVERNING EMPLOYMENT IN THE UN REQUIRE THAT APPLICATIONS FROM ALL MEMBER STATES BE GIVEN EQUAL CONSIDERATION, AND THAT HIRING BE ON THE BASIS OF MERIT AND QUALIFICATION. WE ASSUME THAT THIS PRACTICE WILL BE FOLLOWED IN THE CASE OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS UNIT EVEN THOUGH WE AND OTHERS OPPOSED THE CREATION OF THE BODY.

Q. NOW IN THE CONGRESS, I BELIEVE THERE IS A RESOLUTION PENDING, OPPOSING U.S. FUNDING OF THIS UNIT. WHERE DOES THE U.S. GOVERNMENT STAND ON THAT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING CURRENT ON THAT. I AM NOT BRIEFED ON THAT.
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Q. YESTERDAY IN HIS NEWS CONFERENCE, MR. DAYAN SUGGESTED THAT ISRAEL MIGHT BE PREPARED TO HAVE POLICE BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECURITY OF THE SETTLEMENTS IN THE SINAI. DO WE WEE THAT AS A SOFTENING OF THE ISRAELI POSITION, OR A COMPROMISE IN THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT?

A. I COULDN'T CHARACTERIZE IT. WE HAVE MADE OUR POSITION CLEAR ON SETTLEMENTS, AND THE BOTTOM LINE ON THAT POSITION IS THAT WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SETTLEMENTS HAS GOT TO BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE PARTIES.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING WAS POSTED.

Q. WHAT CONDITIONS, INCLUDING BASING AND USAGE, ARE ATTACHED TO THE PROPOSED SALE OF AIRPLANES TO EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND ISRAEL?

A. WE WILL BE MAKING DETAILED PRESENTATIONS TO CONGRESS, AND SUCH QUESTIONS WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THAT TIME.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT INTEND TO RESPOND TO AN "OPPOSITION PAPER" CIRCULATING ON THE HILL AGAINST THE F-5 SALE TO EGYPT, AS IT HAS TO THE CRITICISM OF THE F-15S FOR SAUDI ARABIA?

A. --ON FEBRUARY 2, REP. LEE HAMILTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST, ASKED THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO SEND HIM COMMENTS ON A MEMORANDUM CIRCULATING IN CONGRESS CONCERNING THE F-15 SALE TO SAUDI ARABIA. ON FEBRUARY 16, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS DOUGLAS J. BENNET, JR. SENT THE COMMENTS HE REQUESTED.
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--A SIMILAR REQUEST WAS MADE BY REP HAMILTON TO THE DEPARTMENT ON FEB 16, RELATING TO THE FEB 14 MEMORANDUM CIRCULATED IN CONGRESS, WHICH CONCERNED THE PROPOSED SALE OF F-5 AIRCRAFT TO EGYPT. THE STATE DEPARTMENT WILL BE RESPONDING TO THIS REQUEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE043110
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: WBHARRIS:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780075-0134
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780239/aaaabgrz.tel
Line Count: 305
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d8f907d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3552639
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 17
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, XF
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d8f907d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014